

The Grange Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122997
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	380564
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Lead inspector	Sonja Joseph

Type of school	Primary
School category	County
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Monk
Headteacher	Glyn Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	8 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sonja Joseph	Additional inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 18 lessons, amounting to approximately nine hours of teaching in total, taught by nine teachers. Learning walks comprising short visits to lessons in a range of subjects were carried out to assess the quality of behaviour and the work undertaken by specific groups of pupils. Approximately one third of lesson observations were conducted jointly with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 2 and 6. Discussions took place with the local authority School Improvement Officer, senior and middle leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and different groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at progress tracking and performance data, the school development plan, pupils' work and a range of policies, guidelines, plans and reviews. The questionnaire responses from 153 parents and carers, 67 pupils and 15 staff were also analysed.

Information about the school

The Grange is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above that found nationally and approximately half speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below that found nationally. The school meets the government's current floor standards for primary schools, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It has achieved Healthy School status and holds Eco Status.

There have been significant changes in leadership since the last inspection with a new Chair of the Governing Body and headteacher. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2010 and is currently on long-term sick leave.

The pre-school care on the school site is not managed by the school and so was not inspected at this time.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The school is not satisfactory because achievement in English and mathematics is inadequate, assessment information is not used well enough to make sure teaching is tailored to pupils' needs, and leaders and managers neither monitor the school nor plan for improvement well enough.
- Pupils start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment that is well above age-related expectations. They make inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 1, and leave with attainment that is broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- Too much teaching is inadequate and not enough is good or better. Less-effective lessons lack pace and pupils are not actively involved in their learning. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) are not always taught rigorously or accurately. Assessment information is not used effectively enough to secure an accurate view of pupils' current attainment. Targets and marking are not used well enough to tell pupils how to improve. The curriculum is inadequate as it does not enable pupils to develop their interests or basic literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.
- Safeguarding does not meet statutory requirements, but pupils feel safe and their behaviour is satisfactory; it is not good because in many lessons seen during the inspection, pupils were too passive in their learning.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance have not been consistently effective or appropriately focused. A lack of direction by senior leaders has contributed to a decline in standards. The impact of action to improve teaching has not been evaluated rigorously and leaders have not secured sufficient improvement. As a result of local authority intervention, systems have recently been established to hold staff more to account for the

progress of pupils in their classes. However, these initiatives have not yet had a measurable impact on pupils' outcomes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve pupils' progress in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that pupils are more actively involved in lessons, rather than spending extended periods listening to teachers
 - making sure pupils are provided with more opportunities to practise and apply their basic skills of numeracy and literacy across the curriculum
 - improving the teaching of phonics, so adults model the sounds correctly, insist that pupils do the same, and make sure that the pace of activities is brisk and lively
 - improving the use of the outdoor areas to promote the communication, language and mathematical skills of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Improve teachers' use of assessment to ensure teaching is at least good by:
 - using accurate data on pupils' progress to provide tasks and activities that are specifically tailored to the needs of individual pupils and groups, and which address any gaps in learning
 - checking regularly on pupils' learning during lessons, to tackle any misconceptions and focus on what pupils need to learn rather than on tasks to complete
 - having a consistent, effective approach to marking and feedback
 - setting clear targets to identify the next steps for individuals and groups
 - tracking pupils' progress more frequently and setting ambitious targets for what pupils can achieve each year and by the end of the key stage.

- Ensure that the school's leaders at all levels, including the governing body, take concerted action to speed up the pace of improvement by:
 - providing a clear structure of leadership for senior and middle leaders, with clear roles and responsibilities for all
 - devising a sharply focused improvement plan which sets out explicitly what must be achieved and includes clear means of measuring success
 - implementing a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching that is followed up with high quality support for all staff
 - checking that agreed teaching strategies are implemented in all classrooms
 - holding teachers closely to account for pupils' progress, including that of significant groups
 - ensuring that all safeguarding procedures are overseen, updated and monitored effectively.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Inspection evidence indicates that over time pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable and achievement is inadequate. Learning and progress are inadequate in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although children's attainment is accurately assessed, this information is not used properly to plan opportunities for independent and extended learning. Most of the children's outdoor learning promotes only their physical development, because activities do not target other required areas. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children were making good progress.

In Key Stage 1, pupils make inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Current data indicate that attainment is broadly average in reading at the end of Year 2. This is inadequate given pupils' above average attainment on entry. The assessment of individual pupils' phonic skills is not sufficiently precise to enable teachers to identify the gaps in their learning. Pupils do not blend sounds well enough to make words. Their development of this skill is hampered because some teachers and support staff sound out letters incorrectly. Pupils make slow progress in writing because they have too few opportunities to develop their writing skills properly in English lessons and in other subjects.

Progress is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. Attainment is broadly average when pupils leave the school, although current attainment in reading is above average. Where learning is effective, pupils' tasks are well matched to their abilities and they talk eagerly about what they have learned. For instance, in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils talked about the strategies they would use to translate numerical figures into word problems. Working collaboratively, pupils explained their thinking, using appropriate mathematical language. However, these features are not evident in all lessons and pupils are not always challenged as much as they should be.

Like their peers, and for the same reasons, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make inadequate progress overall. Similarly, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those known to be eligible for free school meals underachieve. Lower-attaining pupils are not catching up with other pupils of their age because teaching does not meet their needs well enough.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is inadequate because it is failing to promote consistently satisfactory or better progress for pupils. Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaires said that their children are taught well, and pupils agree, but the inspection found that this is not the case. Although some good teaching was observed, it is neither sufficient nor consistent enough to enable all pupils to make good progress and achieve well. In the lessons where teaching was effective, tasks were matched to the full range of pupils' abilities and pupils were actively involved in their learning. Good levels of questioning allowed the teacher to assess pupils as they were learning to

pick up on emerging misconceptions and quickly adapt the lesson to enable good progress. For example, in a Year 3/4 science lesson, pupils were challenged to explain how they would investigate pitch in sound. The teacher encouraged them to use scientific language, checking on their understanding of it and moved them on to using mathematical skills to explain the thinking behind their answers. Despite this example of meaningful links made between subjects, the curriculum is ineffective because it does not ensure pupils develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills across subjects.

In weaker lessons, teachers too often plan activities that fail to meet pupils' needs because they are not secure in assessing pupils' learning. When they gather assessment information, it is not sufficiently well used to tailor provision, particularly for those needing additional support or challenge. This is particularly the case in the Early Years Foundation Stage where activities designed to develop purposeful learning through play are too rare. Teaching methods are not always engaging and pupils often spend too much time listening passively to the teacher. This was observed in a mathematics lesson where pupils had little opportunity to reflect, find things out for themselves, or to practise and use their skills. This approach limits pupils' achievement and restricts their independent development as learners, including in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

Although there have been recent improvements in the use of assessment to group pupils by their abilities in mathematics lessons and enable better target setting, pupils' progress has yet to improve as a result. Too often, pupils of different abilities complete the same work or have targets that do not match their capabilities. Teachers monitor which tasks pupils are doing but often fail to check on pupils' understanding and do not move them on to the next step in their learning fast enough. Marking is not sufficiently detailed or consistent across classes. Even in the best examples of marking, pupils are not given adequate time to respond to their teacher's advice to ensure gaps in learning are quickly and securely addressed.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are welcoming, polite, respectful and courteous as they move around the school. Racial harmony is good and most pupils show respect and understanding for one another. Pupils say they enjoy school. They have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying, and know it is unacceptable. They feel safe at school and are confident that issues raised, including playground disagreements, are dealt with effectively, and their parents agree. However, in some lessons pupils' behaviour and attitudes are not as good, including some low-level disruption. This happens when teachers talk for too long, so there is a lack of pace and pupils are too passive as learners. Although behaviour management procedures are in place, they are not always applied consistently by teachers.

The curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to understand how they can keep themselves safe. Older pupils in particular have a good understanding of e-safety and an appreciation of the potential hazards of fire and busy roads. Parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were strongly positive that the school keeps their children safe. Parents and carers have supported the school in its drive to improve attendance so it is now high.

Leadership and management

The significant changes of leadership and high levels of staff absence have weakened the school's capacity to secure improvement. The deputy headteacher, who is providing cover for the headteacher, has begun more accurate school self-review as a result of local authority intervention. The deputy headteacher is committed and determined, but has too many responsibilities, and leadership is not shared well enough with other staff to ensure swift action is taken on the school's priorities.

The actions of subject leaders have not had the necessary impact on raising achievement. Senior leaders and governors have not made sufficient use of assessment data to gain an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness, to plan and take actions to tackle weaknesses from the last inspection, or to identify priorities to bring about improvements in pupils' learning. The lack of impact means the school is not demonstrating the capacity to improve. The governing body have relied too much on staff to provide information, which has resulted in an uncritical view of how well the school is doing. They are not sufficiently involved in checking the impact of any actions taken on improving pupils' progress. In some cases, this is because the governors do not have enough knowledge to do so.

Until relatively recently, there was no effective system to track the progress of pupils over time so school leaders were unaware of variations in achievement between different groups and between subjects. Middle leaders have had external support to improve the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' attainment, but this is still at an early stage of development. Monitoring by leaders is not good enough to ensure equality of outcomes for all pupils.

Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is overgenerous in assessing the quality of teaching. This is because all leaders, including subject leaders and governors, do not focus sufficiently on monitoring teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. While correct overall priorities are now identified, plans to tackle weak teaching lack detailed diagnosis of the underlying problems. For example, these include the need for assessment information to be used more effectively to match learning to pupils' individual needs. Plans do not have clear enough goals or identify timescales. As a result, staff training has not brought the necessary improvement in teaching.

Safeguarding does not meet requirements. The governing body has not ensured that training has been undertaken at an appropriate level by all staff, nor that procedures are sufficiently frequently updated. The curriculum is inadequate as it does not have sufficient impact on pupils' learning in promoting literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. The range of topics, experiences and extra-curricular activities offered to pupils promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development adequately.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 March 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of The Grange Primary School, Banbury OX16 9YA

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me and the other inspectors. We were pleased to talk to many of you, see you in lessons and listen to you read. What you told us in our discussions and in your questionnaires was very helpful.

We found that those of you in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress. We saw that in some lessons, when you were really interested in the topic or when the work made you think hard, you made good progress. However, not enough lessons are like that and overall you are not making enough progress through the school. We judged that your school needs 'special measures'. This means the school will get help to improve and inspectors will visit the school regularly to check how well things are going.

We want you to have plenty of opportunities to practise your literacy and numeracy skills, even when you are doing other subjects. We have asked the teachers to make sure lessons, including those where you learn letters and sounds, are not too hard and not too easy. We have also asked them to make sure you do not sit just listening for too long, but learn actively. We want marking and your targets to show you more clearly how to improve. You can help the school by using your targets well, and by reading the marking carefully and doing what it says.

We want the school's leaders to draw up a clear plan for improving teaching and for speeding up the progress that you make, especially in Reception and Years 1 and 2. We have also asked them to keep a really close check on how well you are doing.

You can also all help by keeping up your excellent attendance and continuing to try your best in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Sonja Joseph
Lead inspector

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